

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR TRANSFERRING THIN FILMS FROM A  
SOURCE POSITION TO A TARGET POSITION

5 A method and apparatus for handling thin films, for example, for handling and  
assembling membranes in fuel cell electrodes. The apparatus includes a  
translatable vacuum table for mounting the thin film, a perforated drum having a  
source of vacuum for removing the thin film from the vacuum table, and a transfer  
assembly having a perforated surface and a source of vacuum for transferring the  
10 thin film from the perforated drum to a target location. When the thin films are  
provided in containers, the apparatus may also include means for opening the  
containers to access the thin film within. Removal of the thin film from the transfer  
assembly may be aided by a thin film release device, for example, a plurality of  
moveable wires. The apparatus may be automated, for example, the apparatus may  
15 included automated controllers and robotic arms to facilitate the handling of thin film  
materials.